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# Senate, administration differ on Bulgaria

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The Reagan administration has "serious problems" with a congressional move to brand Bulgaria as a sponsor of international terrorism for its alleged involvement in the attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II, the State Department said yesterday.

"Our chief concern is that action by the United States in advance of the Italian decisions could harm the credibility of their process," State Department spokesman John Hughes said.

His comments came in response to amendments attached by unanimous voice vote in the Senate last week to the State, Justice and Commerce appropriations bills.

"It is the sense of Congress that Bulgaria should be declared to be engaged in state-sponsored terrorism," reads one of the amendments. Another would eliminate funds for promoting U.S. trade with the East bloc nation. The legislation is now before the House.

"The State Department has serious problems with the amendment," Mr. Hughes said.

The Secretary of State has the authority to declare countries as sponsors of terrorism. The current list of such countries includes Iran, Syria and Libya.

The Reagan administration "believes it premature to take a position pending completion of the Italian judicial pro-

cess," Mr. Hughes said.

Evidence compiled by an Italian prosecutor investigating the 1981 attempt on the life of the pope has been reported to implicate the Bulgarian government in the plot.

The Bulgarian government responded with a statement which termed the Senate move a "hostile act" representing "a part of . . . the policy of confrontation in the East-West relations."

The Bulgarian statement accused the Senate of trying to interfere in the Italian judicial process by applying pressure for the quick prosecution of Sergei Antonov, the Bulgarian citizen alleged to have been involved in the assassination attempt.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., one of the sponsors of the amendments, said the evidence of Bulgarian involvement in the attempt had become "conclusive" and termed as "outrageous" Commerce Department attempts to promote trade with Bulgaria.

Co-sponsors for the amendments also included Sens. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., John East, R-N.C., Steven Symms, R-Idaho, and Christopher Dodd, D-Conn.

Mr. Hughes pointed out that the administration's "modest" effort to promote trade with Bulgaria was being done to respond to "the needs, interests and requests of the U.S. business community, which often finds it needs assistance in dealing with a centrally planned economy."